

The goal of this self-assessment is to help child care providers become aware of important indicators of quality. This self-assessment tool is not a test or pass/fail exam, but instead is a tool that supports an intentional review of program policies and delivery of services. The focus is on improvement. It consists of two parts.

Part 1 is a self-assessment of:

- Space and Furnishings, Personal Care Routines, Literacy and Language Components, Activities, Promoting Acceptance of Diversity, Interaction, Program Structure, and Provisions for Children with Disabilities

Part 2 is a self-assessment of:

- Contract and Program Policies and Practices, Professional Development

How To Use This Tool

When completing the YoungStar Self-Assessment it is important to honestly assess the work of the program. This YoungStar Self-Assessment can be used in a variety of ways to meet your program's needs, such as:

- Complete one section of the self-assessment at a time,
- Complete the entire self-assessment,
- Work with a mentor to complete the self-assessment. It is important that the work of self-assessment not fall on one person.

This self-assessment is intended to reinforce, not replace, licensing standards. Items in the self-assessment represent high quality standards that are above and beyond what are included in the licensing standards. In the process of using the self-assessment, consider the many aspects of the early child care classroom pertaining to children's play. Focus specifically on required areas, the types and quantities of materials used, the amount of time dedicated to play, any barrier that prevents children from using materials, and the interactions that occur while children are engaged in play with learning materials. As you document materials in the classroom, look at what is provided for children's independent use.

ACTION PLAN: Action plans are an opportunity to think about how you will improve your program in each quality component section. At the bottom of each section is a grid for the program to identify areas for improvement and brainstorm those ideas, feelings and practices that need to be prioritized. These action steps are then transferred to the Quality Improvement Plan document available from the YoungStar Regional Office. The purpose of this tool is to help you get started on looking at your current practices, sorting through your feelings, and begin making improvement in your classrooms and center.

Use this opportunity to reflect on the assessment results and think about:

- 1) What impressed you about your current practices?
- 2) What surprised you about your current practices?
- 3) Were there any safety/supervision issues that may put children at risk?
- 4) What general areas do you foresee getting started on improving the quality today?
- 5) How about the near future?

How To Self-Assess PART 1

Read each item carefully.

Step 1: Decide if the stated indicator is “Not Met” = showing little evidence to support statement. Check the corresponding box for that indicator. For the indicators that are checked “Not Met”, the program is encouraged to adapt to fully meet the criteria stated in the “Better” and/or “Best” column. These items should be addressed on the Action Plan and prioritized for the Quality Improvement Plan.

Step 2: Decide if the stated indicator “Meets” = shows some evidence to support statement

Check the corresponding box for that indicator. For the areas that are checked as “Meets”, the program is encouraged to adapt to fully meet the criteria stated in the “Better” and/or “Best” column. These items should be addressed on the Action Plan and prioritized for the Quality Improvement Plan. If it does meet the indicator, move to step 3.

Step 3: Decide if the stated indicator has evidence in the program to support a “Better” rating.

Check the corresponding box for that indicator. These items may be addressed on the Action Plan and prioritized for the Quality Improvement Plan. If it does meet the indicator, move to step 4.

Step 4: Decide if the stated indicator has evidence in the program to support a “Best” rating.

Definitions of ratings:

Not Met = There is little evidence to support statement

Better = There is sufficient evidence to support statement

NA = Statement does not apply to the child care program.

Meets = There is some evidence to support statement

Best = There is a great deal of evidence to support statement

DEFINITION OF TERMS PART 1:

Accessible: Children are able to reach and use materials independently. Non-Mobile children are brought materials by provider to use.

Much of the Day: Children are able to reach and use materials for a majority of the time that they are awake and able to play. Non-mobile children are brought materials. No child is prevented from playing with materials for a total of 20 minutes of more per day for infants and toddlers or at least one-third of the time the children are in attendance for 2 ½ - 5 year olds.

NA Permitted: If there are no children with disabilities enrolled or children with disabilities do not need the materials for participation in the environment NA is permitted.

HOW TO ASSESS PART 2

The field of family child care is now relying on greater public investment in child care. Family child care programs can use this as an educational tool for gaining knowledge of what providers can strive for in order to have a high-quality work environment to be able to evaluate and plan for setting goals and measuring success. This part of the self-assessment will serve as a working tool for setting goals to improve current work standards.

YES = Consistently Met

NO = Partially Met or Unmet

COMMENTS = Barriers/challenges or strengths that are present

Plan for improvements now and in the future – YoungStar...Start Early. Start Smart. Start Here

Facility Name _____ Ages in Care _____ to _____ Date Completed _____

Name of Person Completing Self-Assessment _____ Position _____

SPACE AND FURNISHINGS	Not Met	Meets	Better	Best	Not Applicable
Space used in home for child care children to play and have free movement, play materials, and furnishings	<input type="checkbox"/> Space is very confined	<input type="checkbox"/> Limited space	<input type="checkbox"/> Enough space/spacious open area	<input type="checkbox"/> Ample space	
Lighting, ventilation, temperature control, and sound-absorbing materials	<input type="checkbox"/> Lacking	<input type="checkbox"/> Adequate	<input type="checkbox"/> Some direct natural lighting available	<input type="checkbox"/> Can be controlled	
Space is maintained and clean	<input type="checkbox"/> In poor repair and poorly maintained	<input type="checkbox"/> Generally in good repair and reasonably clean and well-maintained (Evidence of daily cleaning)	<input type="checkbox"/> In good repair and very well-maintained	<input type="checkbox"/> Floors, walls, and other built-in surfaces made of easy-to-clean materials where needed	
Space for children is accessible to children and adults with disabilities	<input type="checkbox"/> Not accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> Limited accessibility	<input type="checkbox"/> Accessible to all currently using child care space (NA Permitted)	<input type="checkbox"/> Accessible whether or not individuals are involved in the program	

Areas for Improvement/Specific Goals	Resources Needed	Target Date of Completion

SPACE AND FURNISHINGS	Not Met	Meets	Better	Best	Not Applicable
Furniture used for routine care and learning (feeding, sleeping, diapering/toileting, storage of children's possessions)	<input type="checkbox"/> Not enough	<input type="checkbox"/> Enough (including individual storage for child possessions)	<input type="checkbox"/> Furniture is suitable to children's sizes	<input type="checkbox"/> Routine care furniture accessible, convenient and sufficient in quantity	
Furniture used for play and learning	<input type="checkbox"/> Not enough	<input type="checkbox"/> Enough for all ages/abilities of children enrolled	<input type="checkbox"/> Storage is available for extra toys and supplies	<input type="checkbox"/> Furniture for toddlers and older children is child-sized (NA Permitted)	
Furniture is maintained and clean	<input type="checkbox"/> Need to be better maintained and cleaned more often	<input type="checkbox"/> Reasonably clean and well-maintained	<input type="checkbox"/> Promotes self-help as needed	<input type="checkbox"/> Comfortable adult seating for working with children in routines and play is present	
Provision for relaxation and comfort for children at play	<input type="checkbox"/> No soft furnishings accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> Some soft furnishing and three or more soft toys accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> Soft furnishings are accessible much of the day and those used for relaxation are protected from active play <input type="checkbox"/> Many soft toys accessible much of the day	<input type="checkbox"/> Soft furnishings accessible in more than one area in child care <input type="checkbox"/> Soft, child-sized furniture for reading or other quiet play provided for children	

Areas for Improvement/Specific Goals

Resources Needed

Target Date of Completion

SPACE AND FURNISHINGS	Not Met	Meets	Better	Best	Not Applicable
Arrangement of indoor space for routine care and play	<input type="checkbox"/> Leaves little room	<input type="checkbox"/> Furnishings placed to provide some open uncrowded space	<input type="checkbox"/> Arranged for activities to be carried out to meet children's needs with no major problems	<input type="checkbox"/> Materials are usually placed for easy access by children, conveniently close to enough space where they can be used without interference	
Adequate supervision of children in indoor space	<input type="checkbox"/> Arrangement makes it extremely difficult	<input type="checkbox"/> Arrangement allows adequate supervision of children without major difficulties <input type="checkbox"/> Space cleared of breakable objects and things dangerous to children	<input type="checkbox"/> Space provided to allow different kinds of activities to go on at the same time	<input type="checkbox"/> Arrangement usually promotes independent use of furnishing and materials	
Accessible indoor space	<input type="checkbox"/> Children restricted in use of space	<input type="checkbox"/> Most spaces used for care accessible to children with disabilities enrolled in the group (NA Permitted)	<input type="checkbox"/> Materials for different kinds of activities are usually organized by type for productive use by children	<input type="checkbox"/> Convenient, organized storage for extra toys and materials	

Areas for Improvement/Specific Goals	Resources Needed	Target Date of Completion

SPACE AND FURNISHINGS	Not Met	Meets	Better	Best	Not Applicable
Display for children	<input type="checkbox"/> No pictures or other materials displayed specifically for children	<input type="checkbox"/> Some colorful pictures and/or other materials displayed where children can easily see them	<input type="checkbox"/> Many, colorful, simple pictures, poster, and/or photographs displayed throughout the space where children spend majority of their time	<input type="checkbox"/> Photographs of children in group, families, pets, or other familiar faces displayed on child's eye level	
Content of display where children can see them	<input type="checkbox"/> Inappropriate materials displayed	<input type="checkbox"/> Generally appropriate Some work of the children currently enrolled is displayed	<input type="checkbox"/> Many items and work displayed, some within easy reach <input type="checkbox"/> Provider talks to the children about displayed materials.	<input type="checkbox"/> Original children's work predominates. New materials added or display changed at least monthly	
Space available for privacy	<input type="checkbox"/> Children not allowed to play alone or with friend, protected from intrusion by other children	<input type="checkbox"/> Children allowed to find or create space	<input type="checkbox"/> Space set aside for one or two children to play without intrusion by others	<input type="checkbox"/> More than one space available	
Spaces for privacy supervised	<input type="checkbox"/> Isolation of children without interaction or activities	<input type="checkbox"/> All spaces can be easily supervised by provider	<input type="checkbox"/> Accessible for use for much of the day	<input type="checkbox"/> Activities are set up by provider for children to use private space	

Areas for Improvement/Specific Goals	Resources Needed	Target Date of Completion

PERSONAL CARE ROUTINES	Not Met	Meets	Better	Best	Not Applicable
Greeting Parents enter area used for child's care	<input type="checkbox"/> Parents rarely enter area and greeting is short	<input type="checkbox"/> Children greeted warmly and parents enter area	<input type="checkbox"/> Children and parents greeted individually and problems with arrival handled sensitively	<input type="checkbox"/> Relaxed and friendly atmosphere encourages parents to spend time visiting at drop-off times	
Departure Parents enter are used for child's care	<input type="checkbox"/> Parents rarely enter area and departure routine is very short	<input type="checkbox"/> Safe and well-organized and parents enter area	<input type="checkbox"/> Provider greets parents and provides pleasant, organized departure	<input type="checkbox"/> Relaxed and friendly atmosphere encourages parents to spend time visiting a pick-up times	
Information shared with parents daily	<input type="checkbox"/> No information shared	<input type="checkbox"/> Some sharing of child-related information between parents and provider	<input type="checkbox"/> Information about infant's routines shared (NA Permitted)	<input type="checkbox"/> Provider talks to parents about specific things their child did during the day and shares information about care routines, etc.	
Nap/rest schedule	<input type="checkbox"/> Inappropriate for most of children	<input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate for each child	<input type="checkbox"/> Children are helped to relax	<input type="checkbox"/> Personalized with familiar practices	
Nap/rest provisions healthful	<input type="checkbox"/> Crowded and hazards present	<input type="checkbox"/> Healthful – clean bedding, no hazards	<input type="checkbox"/> All cribs/cots separated to 36 inches apart or a solid barrier	<input type="checkbox"/> Personalized, crib/cot placed in same space every day	
Nap/rest supervision	<input type="checkbox"/> A little	<input type="checkbox"/> Sufficient	<input type="checkbox"/> Warm, responsive and pleasant	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-sleeping children have activities provided	

Areas for Improvement/Specific Goals**Resources Needed****Target Date of Completion**

PERSONAL CARE ROUTINES	Not Met	Meets	Better	Best	Not Applicable
Meal/snack schedule	<input type="checkbox"/> Inappropriate (Example: Children are made to wait for food even if hungry or tired)	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets each child's needs	<input type="checkbox"/> Well-organized meal/snack times	<input type="checkbox"/> Encouragement of learning by provider at meal/snack times	
Food served for meals and snacks meets nutrition guidelines	<input type="checkbox"/> Guidelines not met or food served inappropriate	<input type="checkbox"/> Well-balanced age-appropriate food served	<input type="checkbox"/> Menus provided for parents (NA Permitted)	<input type="checkbox"/> Provider cooperates with parents to coordinate introduction of new foods	
Basic sanitary procedures (Hand washing, eating surfaces cleaned and sanitized, utensils used, leftover food is discarded rather than used for a later feeding)	<input type="checkbox"/> Usually neglected	<input type="checkbox"/> Procedures maintained at least half of the time	<input type="checkbox"/> Procedures usually practiced	<input type="checkbox"/> Procedures always practiced	
Feeding practices/ Accommodations for food allergies and cultural diversity	<input type="checkbox"/> Inappropriately used: inadequate supervision or infants not held for bottle feeding <input type="checkbox"/> No accommodations made or for family dietary restrictions (NA Permitted)	<input type="checkbox"/> Appropriately used – adequate supervision for age and abilities of children <input type="checkbox"/> Children's dietary restrictions posted and substitutions made (NA Permitted)	<input type="checkbox"/> Meals/snacks are relaxed and pleasant – slow eaters given plenty of time and there are conversations happening	<input type="checkbox"/> Children have child-sized eating and serving utensils to encourage self-help skills and school-agers prepare own snack	

Areas for Improvement/Specific Goals**Resources Needed****Target Date of Completion**

PERSONAL CARE ROUTINES	Not Met	Meets	Better	Best	Not Applicable
Diapering/toileting sanitary conditions Sanitizing surfaces, disposal of diapers	<input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty maintaining	<input type="checkbox"/> Maintained at least half of the time	<input type="checkbox"/> Usually maintained and easy to maintain	<input type="checkbox"/> Always maintained	
Diapering/toileting needs Schedule of toilet/diapering changes, lack of provisions – paper towels, soap, running water, sanitizing solution, and supplies readily available	<input type="checkbox"/> Major problems with meeting needs	<input type="checkbox"/> Usually met in appropriate manner	<input type="checkbox"/> Warm running water near area and easy-to-clean surfaces	<input type="checkbox"/> Provisions are convenient and accessible by provider and child	
Provider and child handwashing practices after diapering/toileting	<input type="checkbox"/> Often neglected	<input type="checkbox"/> Usually wash hands after	<input type="checkbox"/> Always wash hands after	<input type="checkbox"/> Self-help skills promoted as children are ready	
Supervision/interaction while diapering/toileting Safety and sanitary provisions	<input type="checkbox"/> Unpleasant or inadequate	<input type="checkbox"/> Adequate for ages and abilities of children	<input type="checkbox"/> Pleasant provider-child interaction	<input type="checkbox"/> Children appear to manage their routines as independently as they should be able to, considering ages and abilities	

Areas for Improvement/Specific Goals	Resources Needed	Target Date of Completion

PERSONAL CARE ROUTINES	Not Met	Meets	Better	Best	Not Applicable
Management of health practices to cut down on spread of germs	<input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty managing	<input type="checkbox"/> At least half of the time provider	<input type="checkbox"/> Usually acts	<input type="checkbox"/> Children encouraged to manage health practices independently	
Handwashing for general health practices by children and provider	<input type="checkbox"/> Often neglected	<input type="checkbox"/> At least 75% of the time when needed to protect health	<input type="checkbox"/> Consistently washed hands with only 1 or 2 lapses	<input type="checkbox"/> Children encouraged to manage handwashing practices independently	
Personal items for meeting health needs	<input type="checkbox"/> No extra clothes available or children changed when needed	<input type="checkbox"/> Extra clothes available and children changed when needed	<input type="checkbox"/> To meet health needs indoors and outdoors, children are properly cared for	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual toothbrushes used at least once daily in full-day program (NA Permitted)	
Medical risks minimized	<input type="checkbox"/> Smoking/drinking alcohol/use of illegal drugs occurs in child care areas either indoors or outdoors <input type="checkbox"/> Children with contagious illness are not removed from contact with others	<input type="checkbox"/> All medications are administered properly. (NA Permitted)	<input type="checkbox"/> Provider models good health practices (washes hands frequently, dresses appropriately for the weather)	<input type="checkbox"/> To handle child care related questions, provider has arranged for a health consultant	

Areas for Improvement/Specific Goals	Resources Needed	Target Date of Completion

PERSONAL CARE ROUTINES	Not Met	Meets	Better	Best	Not Applicable
Safety hazards indoors	<input type="checkbox"/> Many hazards that could result in serious injury	<input type="checkbox"/> Some safety hazards indoors	<input type="checkbox"/> No safety hazards that could cause serious injury	<input type="checkbox"/> Provider ensures that children follow safety rules	
Safety hazards outdoors	<input type="checkbox"/> Many hazards that could result in serious injury	<input type="checkbox"/> Some safety hazards (and outdoors combined)	<input type="checkbox"/> No safety hazards that could cause serious injury	<input type="checkbox"/> Provider ensures that children follow safety rules	
Supervision of children's safety	<input type="checkbox"/> Supervision for protection indoors and outdoors is very challenging	<input type="checkbox"/> Adequate supervision to protect children indoors and outdoors <input type="checkbox"/> Provider has essentials needed to handle emergencies	<input type="checkbox"/> Provider usually anticipates and takes action to eliminate safety hazards <input type="checkbox"/> Home has passed official fire inspection, emergency evacuation procedures are practiced monthly with children	<input type="checkbox"/> Provider explains reasons for safety rules to children	

Safety Hazards (not a complete listing):

Indoors: Electrical outlets, strings/cords, heavy objects, medicines, walkers, water temperature, staples/tacks, mats or rugs, fireplace/heater, stairwells, small objects that can cause choking, crib mattress not fitting snugly, bleach solution spray, plastic or styrofoam objects, guns, etc.

Outdoors: Play areas, unfenced swimming pool, tools not meant for children's use, dangerous substances, sharp or dangerous objects, walkways or stairs, roads or driveways, play equipment, etc.

Areas for Improvement/Specific Goals	Resources Needed	Target Date of Completion

LITERACY COMPONENTS	Not Met	Meets	Better	Best	Not Applicable
Amount of talking to children in routines and play	<input type="checkbox"/> Little or no talking	<input type="checkbox"/> Moderate amount	<input type="checkbox"/> Frequent talking	<input type="checkbox"/> All children are conversed with	
Children hear language	<input type="checkbox"/> Loud noises often interfere with children's ability to hear language	<input type="checkbox"/> Reasonable quiet in the home so children can hear language	<input type="checkbox"/> Uses signing or alternative communication when needed	<input type="checkbox"/> Provider talks about many and varied topics with children	
Provider tone of voice with children	<input type="checkbox"/> Unpleasant manner of talk to children	<input type="checkbox"/> Neutral or pleasant tone of voice usually to children	<input type="checkbox"/> Talk is meaningful to children and personalized	<input type="checkbox"/> Provider uses a wide range of exact words in communicating	
Provider vocabulary usage in talking to children	<input type="checkbox"/> Limited vocabulary	<input type="checkbox"/> Content of talk is generally encouraging and positive	<input type="checkbox"/> Provider uses descriptive words for objects and actions	<input type="checkbox"/> Complexity adjusted for language to match children's abilities	
Verbal or nonverbal communication by children	<input type="checkbox"/> Children's communication is discouraged much of the day	<input type="checkbox"/> At least half of the time when children are attempting to communicate, a positive response is given	<input type="checkbox"/> Provider generally responds in a timely and positive manner and follows through appropriately	<input type="checkbox"/> Provider adds more words and ideas to what children say (NA Permitted)	
Encouragement of children's communication by provider	<input type="checkbox"/> No encouragement	<input type="checkbox"/> Some encouragement	<input type="checkbox"/> Frequent encouragement	<input type="checkbox"/> Provider asks questions to encourage more complex answers	
Social talking with children	<input type="checkbox"/> Talking used only to control children's behavior	<input type="checkbox"/> Some social talking with children by provider, children allowed to talk much of the day	<input type="checkbox"/> Encouragement of children to communicate with one another, provider has turn-taking conversations (NA Permitted)	<input type="checkbox"/> Provider maintain good balance between listening and talking, links older children's talk with writing (NA Permitted)	
Amount of appropriate books accessible daily	<input type="checkbox"/> Fewer than 3 for each age group	<input type="checkbox"/> At least 6 total and no less than 3 for each age group for much of the day	<input type="checkbox"/> At least 12 for each age group, but no less than 2 for each child in each age group for much of the day	<input type="checkbox"/> Books gathered together in one or more locations for convenient and comfortable use by children	
Condition of books	<input type="checkbox"/> Generally in poor repair	<input type="checkbox"/> Almost all books in good repair	<input type="checkbox"/> Wide selection of books accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> Books are added or changed to maintain interest	

Books read to children daily (should not contain material that is violent or could be frightening to children)	<input type="checkbox"/> Books not read	<input type="checkbox"/> Books read, participation encouraged only while children are interested; children not forced to participate	<input type="checkbox"/> Books read informally with individuals or very small groups of interested children (NA Permitted)	<input type="checkbox"/> Book times are pleasant and interactive and provider encourages children in all age groups to read at their ability level*	
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* Home provider names pictures for infant, assist toddler with turning pages, show preschoolers how words match pictures, assist school-agers with reading.

Appropriate books:

- Infants and Toddlers: Cloth or hard page books, pictures of familiar objects
- Two-year olds through 5 years: Children's paper story books, beginning reading books
- School-agers: More challenging story books, beginning reading books, chapter books

Notes:

2. When helping children understand language, providers may have differing ways culturally and individually that they talk to children. Whatever the personal communication style of the provider, there can be some variation in the way that this is done.
3. When helping children use language, providers may change roles as the child becomes more competent in communication. The balance between listening and talking should become more equal, because the provider is encouraging children to use language.
4. Books include a variety and wide selection of topics for children including: familiar experiences, fiction/fantasy, factual information, animals, books that reflect different cultures, races, ages, and abilities.

Areas for Improvement/Specific Goals

Resources Needed

Target Date of Completion

ACTIVITIES	Not Met	Meets	Better	Best	Not Applicable
Appropriate number of materials for each age group enrolled, accessible for daily use; Materials are safe, challenging but not frustrating, and may include household items	No materials in the following categories: <input type="checkbox"/> Fine Motor <input type="checkbox"/> Art <input type="checkbox"/> Music and Movement <input type="checkbox"/> Blocks <input type="checkbox"/> Dramatic Play <input type="checkbox"/> Math/number <input type="checkbox"/> Nature/science <input type="checkbox"/> Sand and water play (no sand or water play available for children 18 mo. – 6 yrs)	Some materials much of the day in the following categories: <input type="checkbox"/> Fine Motor <input type="checkbox"/> Art <input type="checkbox"/> Music and Movement <input type="checkbox"/> Blocks <input type="checkbox"/> Dramatic Play <input type="checkbox"/> Math/number <input type="checkbox"/> Nature/science <input type="checkbox"/> Sand and water play (provided outdoors or indoors at least once every 2 weeks year-round)	Many and varied materials much of the day in the following categories: <input type="checkbox"/> Fine Motor <input type="checkbox"/> Art <input type="checkbox"/> Music and Movement <input type="checkbox"/> Blocks <input type="checkbox"/> Dramatic Play <input type="checkbox"/> Math/number <input type="checkbox"/> Nature/science <input type="checkbox"/> Sand and water play (play provided at least once a week)	Additional materials rotated for variety in the following categories: <input type="checkbox"/> Fine Motor <input type="checkbox"/> Art <input type="checkbox"/> Music and Movement <input type="checkbox"/> Blocks <input type="checkbox"/> Dramatic Play <input type="checkbox"/> Math/number <input type="checkbox"/> Nature/science <input type="checkbox"/> Sand and water play (play provided daily)	
Condition, usage and storage of materials	<input type="checkbox"/> Generally in poor repair <input type="checkbox"/> Materials are toxic or unsafe for children	<input type="checkbox"/> Generally in good repair <input type="checkbox"/> Materials are nontoxic and safe for children <input type="checkbox"/> Some materials accessible for each group	<input type="checkbox"/> Materials are well-organized for independent use, organized by type for independent use <input type="checkbox"/> Provider interacts with children in relation to their play with the materials and facilitates appropriate use of materials	<input type="checkbox"/> Space used for play is convenient <input type="checkbox"/> Access to materials is based on children's abilities <input type="checkbox"/> Three-dimensional art materials used at least monthly with preschoolers and older children(NA Permitted)	

Areas for Improvement/Specific Goals**Resources Needed****Target Date of Completion**

ACTIVITIES	Not Met	Meets	Better	Best	Not Applicable
Interaction and experiences with the natural world	<input type="checkbox"/> Supervision or interaction by provider during activities is low <input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities for children to experience the natural world are not available	<input type="checkbox"/> Some opportunities to experience the natural world daily – indoors or outdoors <input type="checkbox"/> Children are not required to participate Alternate activities are made available <input type="checkbox"/> Providers use everyday events as a basis for helping children learn about nature/science <input type="checkbox"/> Supervision of sand/water play is appropriate for ages and abilities of children	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual expression encouraged <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor experiences with nature provided at least 2 times a week <input type="checkbox"/> Some daily experiences with living plants or animals indoors <input type="checkbox"/> Sand or water activities set up to facilitate play	<input type="checkbox"/> Creativity is encouraged <input type="checkbox"/> Activities that require more input from provider are offered for preschoolers and older children at least every two weeks <input type="checkbox"/> Materials for this activity are rotated at least monthly	
Music and movement	<input type="checkbox"/> Not available during day <input type="checkbox"/> Other noise or activities interfere with ongoing activities	<input type="checkbox"/> Provider initiates music and movement activity daily <input type="checkbox"/> Recorded music is used at limited times and has a positive purpose	<input type="checkbox"/> Provider informally sings/chants daily with infants, toddlers, or preschoolers	<input type="checkbox"/> Activities that require more input from provider are offered for preschoolers and older children at least every two weeks <input type="checkbox"/> Materials for this activity are rotated at least monthly	
Dramatic Play	<input type="checkbox"/> Materials are not available for dramatic play	<input type="checkbox"/> Some materials available for dramatic play	<input type="checkbox"/> Many and varied materials available for dramatic play for each age group <input type="checkbox"/> Some dramatic props (dress-up hats and clothes, play kitchens, etc.) are child-sized	<input type="checkbox"/> Dramatic materials available to represent diversity <input type="checkbox"/> Provider facilitates dramatic play	

Math/Numbers	<input type="checkbox"/> Math/number taught primarily through rote counting or worksheets <input type="checkbox"/> Talking with children during free play or routine times about number or math concepts – size and shape is limited	<input type="checkbox"/> Provider sometimes talks about math/number concepts during free play or routines	<input type="checkbox"/> Provider talks about math/number concepts during both free play and routines	<input type="checkbox"/> Activities that require more input from provider are offered for preschoolers and older children at least every two weeks (NA Permitted) <input type="checkbox"/> Materials for this activity are rotated at least monthly	
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Areas for Improvement/Specific Goals

Resources Needed

Target Date of Completion

PROMOTING ACCEPTANCE of DIVERSITY	Not Met	Meets	Better	Best	Not Applicable
Racial or cultural diversity observed in materials used by children	<input type="checkbox"/> Evidence is limited	<input type="checkbox"/> Some examples observed in materials	<input type="checkbox"/> Many examples observed	<input type="checkbox"/> Inclusion of diversity is part of all areas and materials used by children	
Materials showing diversity are a balanced representation	<input type="checkbox"/> Representation is only negative stereotypes	<input type="checkbox"/> Show diversity in a positive way	<input type="checkbox"/> Many examples of props representing various races/cultures accessible for use in dramatic play	<input type="checkbox"/> Inclusion of diversity is part of daily routines and play activities	
Promote understanding and acceptance of diversity	<input type="checkbox"/> No counteraction of prejudice when shown by children or other adults	<input type="checkbox"/> No prejudice is observed or provider intervenes appropriately to counteract prejudice shown by children or other adults	<input type="checkbox"/> Provider encourages children to accept diversity by modeling the understanding of diversity	<input type="checkbox"/> Activities included to promote understanding and acceptance of diversity	

Areas for Improvement/Specific Goals	Resources Needed	Target Date of Completion

ACTIVITIES	Not Met	Meets	Better	Best	Not Applicable
Appropriateness of materials in use of TV, video, and/or computer – age appropriate, non-violent, and culturally sensitive	<input type="checkbox"/> Not appropriate	<input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate	<input type="checkbox"/> Materials are limited to those considered “good for children”	<input type="checkbox"/> Most of the materials encourage active involvement and are used to support and extend children’s current interests and experiences	
Alternate activities accessible while TV/video/computer is being used	<input type="checkbox"/> Alternate activity is not allowed	<input type="checkbox"/> Some alternative activity accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> Many interesting alternative activities accessible for free choice	<input type="checkbox"/> Children can participate in active play rather than spending time using TV, video, or computers	
TV, Video, and Computer use is limited	<input type="checkbox"/> Exposure is not limited	<input type="checkbox"/> Time allowed for children 12 months and older to use is limited appropriately for age of children	<input type="checkbox"/> Provider is actively involved with the children in use of TV, video, and computer	<input type="checkbox"/> Exposure is limited	

Definitions of Appropriate by Ages:

- Toddlers under the age of 24 months should not watch television, video, or other visual recordings, or view computers
- Children 2 years of age and older: TV, video and computer screen-time use is limited to 60 minutes per day

Areas for Improvement/Specific Goals**Resources Needed****Target Date of Completion**

ACTIVITIES	Not Met	Meets	Better	Best	Not Applicable
Active physical play outdoor and indoor space available	<input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor or indoor space to use daily is not available	<input type="checkbox"/> Some uncrowded space, indoor or outdoor, used 1 hour per day	<input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor area used 1 hour per day year-round, weather permitting	<input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor space has 2 or more types of surfaces permitting different types of play	
Safety of outdoor space	<input type="checkbox"/> Space is generally very dangerous	<input type="checkbox"/> Spaces are generally safe	<input type="checkbox"/> Large outdoor area is not crowded or cluttered and is easily accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor area has some protection from the elements	
Quantity of appropriate materials/equipment for active physical play	<input type="checkbox"/> None for any age group in care	<input type="checkbox"/> Some suitable for each child in the group, used daily	<input type="checkbox"/> Ample for physical play to keep children active and interested	<input type="checkbox"/> Materials/equipment used daily stimulate a variety of large muscle skills (NA Permitted)	
Safe and appropriate equipment and materials for active physical play indoor and outdoor	<input type="checkbox"/> Equipment generally in poor repair	<input type="checkbox"/> Equipment generally in good repair	<input type="checkbox"/> All space and equipment are safe and appropriate for children who are allowed to use them	<input type="checkbox"/> Space is organized so that different types of activities do not interfere with one another	

Examples of appropriate materials and equipment by age:

- Infants: small push toys, balls, sturdy things to pull up on, blanket, ramps for crawling
- Toddlers: riding toys without pedals, large push-pull wheel toys, balls, slide, tunnels, cardboard boxes, age appropriate climbing equipment
- Preschoolers: climbing equipment, riding toys, wagons, balls, low basketball hoop
- School-age: riding equipment, jump ropes, hula-hoops, equipment for ball games

Areas for Improvement/Specific Goals**Resources Needed****Target Date of Completion**

INTERACTION	Not Met	Meets	Better	Best	Not Applicable
Supervision appropriate for ages and abilities of children during play and learning	<input type="checkbox"/> Usually not sufficient	<input type="checkbox"/> Usually appropriate	<input type="checkbox"/> Consistently careful supervision	<input type="checkbox"/> Usually acts to avoid problems before they occur	
Staff control, responsiveness and active supervision	<input type="checkbox"/> Most supervision is punitive or overly controlling <input type="checkbox"/> Usually not responsive to or involved with children	<input type="checkbox"/> Most supervision is non-punitive and control is exercised in a reasonable way <input type="checkbox"/> Actively supervises – other work interests do not take away from caregiving <input type="checkbox"/> Usually responsive and involved	<input type="checkbox"/> Shows awareness of the whole group even when working with one child or a small group <input type="checkbox"/> Reacts quickly to solve problems in a comforting and supportive way	<input type="checkbox"/> Talks to children about ideas related to their activities <input type="checkbox"/> Provider's input into learning is balanced with the children's need to explore independently	
Provider-child interactions	<input type="checkbox"/> Interactions are unpleasant, physical contact is not warm or responsive	<input type="checkbox"/> Few, if any, unpleasant interactions; no harsh verbal or physical provider-child interactions	<input type="checkbox"/> Participates in activities with children and shows interest in or appreciation of what they do <input type="checkbox"/> Shows respect for the children and responds sympathetically to help children who are upset, hurt, or angry <input type="checkbox"/> Uses frequent positive verbal and physical interaction with children throughout the day	<input type="checkbox"/> Is usually sensitive about children's feelings and reactions <input type="checkbox"/> Encourages the development of mutual respect between children and adults	

Areas for Improvement/Specific Goals

Resources Needed

Target Date of Completion

INTERACTION	Not Met	Meets	Better	Best	Not Applicable
Methods of discipline used by provider	<input type="checkbox"/> Physical punishment or severe methods used	<input type="checkbox"/> No physical punishment or severe methods ever used	<input type="checkbox"/> Positive methods of discipline used effectively	<input type="checkbox"/> Helps children understand the effects of their actions on others	
Discipline management by provider	<input type="checkbox"/> So lax that there is little order or control	<input type="checkbox"/> Usually maintains enough control to prevent problems – children hurting one another, endangering themselves, or being destructive	<input type="checkbox"/> Program is set up to avoid conflict and promote appropriate interaction Attention frequently given when children are behaving well	<input type="checkbox"/> Actively involves children in solving conflicts and problems (NA Permitted)	
Behavior expectations for age and developmental level of children by provider	<input type="checkbox"/> Usually inappropriate	<input type="checkbox"/> Realistic and with few, if any, exceptions	<input type="checkbox"/> Reacts consistently to children's behavior	<input type="checkbox"/> Seeks advice from other professionals concerning behavior problems	
Interactions among children	<input type="checkbox"/> Not encouraged Interactions among children often negative	<input type="checkbox"/> Encouraged Most interactions among children are neutral or positive	<input type="checkbox"/> Provider consistently models good social skills	<input type="checkbox"/> Provider points out and talks about instances of positive social interaction among children or between adults and children	
Handling types of interactions by provider	<input type="checkbox"/> Ignore or handle harshly negative interactions among children	<input type="checkbox"/> Usually stops negative and hurtful interactions	<input type="checkbox"/> Facilitates positive peer interactions among children	<input type="checkbox"/> Initiates some appropriate activities that give children experience in working or playing together (NA Permitted)	

Areas for Improvement/Specific Goals**Resources Needed****Target Date of Completion**

PROGRAM STRUCTURE	Not Met	Meets	Better	Best	Not Applicable
Schedule – how time is used	<input type="checkbox"/> Too rigid or too flexible – not satisfying needs of many children	<input type="checkbox"/> Basic schedule exists that is familiar to children and meets the needs of most children	<input type="checkbox"/> Individualized for infants, with some flexibility for toddlers and older children	<input type="checkbox"/> Individualized so that the needs of each child are met	
Balance of structure and flexibility	<input type="checkbox"/> Children’s routine needs are not met; Provider has no time to supervise children at play	<input type="checkbox"/> At least one indoor and one outdoor play period occurs daily <input type="checkbox"/> Both gross motor and less active play occur daily	<input type="checkbox"/> A variety of play activities occur each day – some initiated by provider <input type="checkbox"/> No long period of waiting during transitions between daily events	<input type="checkbox"/> Most transitions between daily events are smooth	
Opportunity for free play and amount of supervision	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Either</i> little opportunity for free play <i>or</i> much of the day spent in unsupervised free play	<input type="checkbox"/> Free play occurs for at least one hour daily indoors <i>and</i> outdoors, weather permitting <input type="checkbox"/> Some supervision provided to protect children’s safety and to facilitate play	<input type="checkbox"/> Free play occurs daily for much of the day, some indoors and outdoors, weather permitting <input type="checkbox"/> Provider is actively involved in facilitating children’s play throughout the day	<input type="checkbox"/> Supervision used as an educational interaction	
Quantity of toys, materials and equipment provided for children to use in free play	<input type="checkbox"/> Inadequate	<input type="checkbox"/> Adequate	<input type="checkbox"/> Ample and varied	<input type="checkbox"/> Materials added to stimulate interest during free play	

Areas for Improvement/Specific Goals	Resources Needed	Target Date of Completion

PROGRAM STRUCTURE	Not Met	Meets	Better	Best	Not Applicable
Group time	<input type="checkbox"/> Children usually kept together as a whole group	<input type="checkbox"/> Some opportunity for children to play individually, or be part of self-selected small groups	<input type="checkbox"/> Whole-group gatherings limited to short periods, suited to age and individual needs of children	<input type="checkbox"/> Whole-group activities are set up to maximize children's success	
Provider interaction during group time	<input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities to interact with individual children or small groups are very few <input type="checkbox"/> When children do not participate well in whole group gets frustrated or upset	<input type="checkbox"/> Positive and acceptant with children during whole-group time	<input type="checkbox"/> Many play activities done in self-selected small groups or individually and provider engages in educational interaction	<input type="checkbox"/> Engages in educational interaction with small groups and individual children by guiding practice through conversations and introduction of new materials and resources to the program	
Activities done in whole group	<input type="checkbox"/> Usually inappropriate for children	<input type="checkbox"/> Usually appropriate	<input type="checkbox"/> Alternative activities are accessible for children not participating in whole-group activity	<input type="checkbox"/> Engages in educational interaction with the whole group	

Areas for Improvement/Specific Goals

Resources Needed

Target Date of Completion

NOTE: This section is assessed only if there is a child in the group with an identified and diagnosed disability

PROVISIONS FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES	Not Met	Meets	Better	Best	Not Applicable
Information from available assessments	<input type="checkbox"/> Assessing children's needs or finding out about available assessments is not completed on a regular basis	<input type="checkbox"/> Provider has information from available assessments	<input type="checkbox"/> Provider follows through on recommended activities and interactions by other professionals	<input type="checkbox"/> Most of the professional intervention is carried out within the regular activities of the home	
Modifications made to meet the needs of children with disabilities	<input type="checkbox"/> Attempts to meet children's special needs are difficult to make	<input type="checkbox"/> Minor modifications made to meet needs of children with disabilities	<input type="checkbox"/> Environment, program, and schedule modifications made so children can participate in many activities with others	<input type="checkbox"/> Children with disabilities are integrated into the group and participate in most activities	
Involvement of parents in helping provider understand children's needs or in setting goals for the children	<input type="checkbox"/> No involvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Some involvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Parents frequently involved	<input type="checkbox"/> Provider contributes to individual assessments and intervention plans	
Children with disabilities are involved with the other children	<input type="checkbox"/> Very little involvement with the rest of the group	<input type="checkbox"/> Some involvement in ongoing activities with other children	<input type="checkbox"/> Children participate in many activities with others	<input type="checkbox"/> Children with disabilities are integrated into the group and participate in most activities	

Areas for Improvement/Specific Goals	Resources Needed	Target Date of Completion

Compiled self-assessment checklist adapted from: Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale-Revised Edition, 2007. Thelma Harms, Debby Cryer, Richard M. Clifford, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

CONTRACT AND PROGRAM POLICIES			
This section is to be used as guidelines for assessing or developing contracts with parents and developing policies for the program.	YES	NO	COMMENTS
The provider charges fees for child care. (Additional fees used to meet expenses – late fees, extended-care fees, fees for special services, reimbursements from CACFP, etc.) Provider has:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> an income adequate to support a family in the provider's community, 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> health care coverage that fully covers the provider and any dependents not covered under an alternate health care plan 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> contributed 5% to a retirement plan 			
Provider receives an annual cost-of-living increase (reflected in increased fees).			
Provider has a written provider-parent contract that specifies:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> all contracted hours are paid for in full, regardless of child's attendance fees are paid in full when program has an unexpected closure due to provider illness or family emergency. A maximum number of paid days for such closures may be established in the contract. 			
Fee and payment schedules are revised to reflect changes when the state reimbursement rate changes for subsidized child care.			
When the provider achieves a higher level of formal education or becomes nationally accredited, has it guaranteed in the contract to revise the fee and payment schedule to reward this achievement.			
Financial records, including an operating budget, are used to gauge the program's stability.			
A record-keeping system is in place to maximize business deductions available to the provider and to comply with tax laws.			
The program is covered by insurance policies.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program liability, homeowners, disability insurance for the provider, and vehicle insurance if program transports children 			
For the purpose of setting and collecting fees, the provider requests parents to check with their employers about pre-tax child care benefits, and/or with local agencies about child care subsidies.			
Provider receives ten (10) paid days off per year.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vacation, sick, holidays, professional development, or personal days <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sick days can be used to take care of sick family members. 			
For the purpose of setting fees, to calculate work hours, the provider includes time for planning, preparation, cleaning, shopping, record-keeping and conversing with enrolled of prospective parents.			
A work schedule has been established that allows break time and respite needed to maintain energy and stamina required for caring for children. Consideration given to:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the number of hours worked per day or per week 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the enrollment patterns that allow some "down time" during the day and use of qualified persons or family member to on-site during such "down time (naptime) 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> parent volunteers and/or family members helping with program tasks – shopping, laundry, equipment repair 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> substitute providers employed if needed 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> contracting services – food catering, cleaning, maintenance, tax preparation 			

SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL – FAMILY CHILD CARE



<p>Parent and provider sign a contract. Contract addresses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hours of care • payment policies, fee schedule, late fees, overtime rates, fees for unscheduled time • other fees – registration, meal expenses (non-CACFP), special activity fees, infant supplies provided by provider, continuing education fund for provider, returned checks, court or collection agency costs in collection of overdue payments, and for seeking emergency medical attention • policies for vacation, holiday and sick leave that cover absence of provider and children • termination of care – trial period at initial enrollment, conflict resolution process, conditions for immediate termination, and notification period for full fee payment • annual contract updates and renewal provision • parents' responsibility for finding alternate care, circumstances where a substitute may be hired, minimal qualifications of substitutes, and an emergency back-up plan for substitutes 			
<p>Written program policies for parents. Included are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emergency procedures • discipline and guidance policies • daily schedule • job description of care and education of children – includes program planning, record keeping, budgeting, shopping (food and program materials), food preparation, cleaning, maintenance of child care environment • professional credentials and/or level of education in child care and development • program regulation statement (licensed or certified), additional information on regulations rights for parents and consumers • philosophy statement and program goals – reviewed annually with parents • additional items required from parents to provide for their child's care – diapers, food formula, clothing, or bedding 			
Communication to ensure ongoing information regarding new procedures, policies, events, and ways to involve parents in their child's care and education. (Bulletin board, newsletter, daily activity notes, journals, phone calls, parent/provider conferences, "open door" visitation policy, parent volunteer opportunities, social activities, and fundraising projects).			
Operation of program allows for parents to be aware of the family child care budget – expenses that are involved.			

Areas for Improvement/Specific Goals	Resources Needed	Target Date of Completion

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This section is to be used as guidelines for assessing or developing a professional development plan and continuing education goals.	YES	NO	COMMENTS
Provider has received education in child development and small business management – specific aspects of family child care business operations.			
Training has been received in child care health and safety issues and updates training as needed.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe practices for lifting children and heavy objects – prevention of back and knee injuries. • Management of infectious disease and universal precautions for blood-borne pathogens. • Nutrition and safe food-handling practices. • Stress management and other issues – emotional and mental well-being of provider and children. 			
Participation in continuing education. Professional development time may be used for state-mandated training, credit-based courses, professional conferences, observation time in other child care programs, and/or release time for early care and education advocacy activities.			
Participation in ongoing diversity training with a focus on working with both adults and children.			
Program budget has annual fund for professional development expenses. Covers cost of training, expenses to attend training, substitutes.			
Provider has opportunity for recognition and reward to achieve higher levels of formal education and/or accreditation through parent fee increases, grant programs or other programs.			
An assessment of program quality is done annually with parent feedback. Provider uses results to plan professional development activities.			
A peer support network (informal or formal) is available to engage in problem-solving with peers to benefit from experience and encouragement.			
Provider participates in a professional association, support group or early childhood organization.			
Provider is aware of community supports to enhance professional development.			

SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL – FAMILY CHILD CARE



Areas for Improvement/Specific Goals	Resources Needed	Target Date of Completion

WORK ENVIRONMENT			
This section is to be used as guidelines for assessing quality from the perspective of a provider's needs.		YES	NO
<p>The physical space: (arrangement, daily schedule, use of materials)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> follows applicable state and local regulations is balanced to meet the needs of both child care and provider's family has adult-sized chairs/work stations for provider has designed for height and location of regularly used equipment to allow provider to use gesture and postures that are safe and comfortable has storage space that is easily accessible and ample has office or designated area for conducting family child care business has a place for provider and parents to meet together 			
Clear policies (consistently implemented) to delineate the conditions which children are excluded from the program because of illness are present in parent policies.			
Policies contain an emergency back-up plan that in the event that care cannot be offered due to provider illness, injury, natural disasters are described.			
Copies of reports resulting from inspection of home by building, health, safety or licensing officials are posted for parents.			
To enhance the home as a safe and healthy work environment, the provider is aware of community resources.			

Areas for Improvement/Specific Goals	Resources Needed	Target Date of Completion

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

This section is to be used as guidelines for identifying community resources that are needed to assure high-quality family child care jobs.	YES	NO	COMMENTS
Providers have qualified substitute/respice providers available when family or personal emergencies arise, leave time for when provider is not closing the child care and when professional development activities are available to participate in.			
Possibilities of professional support in the community are available to the provider. The following are examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> an organized substitute pool (screens and provides training for substitutes) technical assistance and consultation on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> program and business management designing child care environments applying for loans/grants Resource and Referral program available to help maintain provider's desired enrollment access to other professionals expertise (nutritionist, social workers, health care practitioners) 			
Access to appropriate, affordable and relevant training and education to keep up-to-date and offer new ideas for program planning. (Time of day, length of training session, location, basic to advanced-level preferably with college credit). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information and funding is available to provider from various community agencies. Information is available regarding professional associations, support groups and advocacy networks. 			
Information regarding resources and services for children with special needs and their caregivers is available. Information included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to make appropriate referrals Impact of Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) on enrollment policies 			
Opportunities are available to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> network with peers, family and friends be part of a mentoring program during the first two years of operation network with center-based child care teachers for sharing information and resources and working on advocacy efforts promote family child care providers as leaders in advocacy networks, community committees/forums, and training of other providers provide a community-based "speakers bureau" and other public education activities by providers to address parent concerns about child care issues and enhance the image of family child care 			

SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL – FAMILY CHILD CARE



Areas for Improvement/Specific Goals	Resources Needed	Target Date of Completion

Compiled self-assessment checklist adapted from: Creating Better Family Child Care Jobs: Model Work Standards. Center for the Child Care Workforce. (1999). Washington, D.C.